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# THE COMBINED SYSTEM OF EDUCATING THE DEAF,

BY

EDWARD M. GALLAUDET, Ph. D., L.L.D.

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AN ADDRESS DELIVERED UPON INVITATION BEFORE THE SECOND  
CONGRESS HELD UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE BRITISH  
DEAF AND DUMB ASSOCIATION IN THE MISSION  
HALL OF THE GLASGOW DEAF AND  
DUMB MISSION, AUGUST 5-7, 1891.

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REVISED AND CORRECTED BY THE AUTHOR.

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## NOTICE.

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The Volta Bureau, having for one of its objects the diffusion of knowledge relating to the Deaf, will issue occasional publications presenting the views of prominent advocates of the various methods of educating the Deaf.

The Bureau, however, disclaims the endorsement of any of the theories expressed by the authors whose works it may publish.

In accordance with this principle, the accompanying address by Dr. E. M. Gallaudet, President of the National Deaf-Mute College, is herewith presented with the compliments of the Volta Bureau.

JOHN HITZ,  
*Superintendent.*



VOLTA BUREAU.

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Washington, D.C.**





# THE COMBINED SYSTEM OF EDUCATING THE DEAF.

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MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN OF THE BRITISH DEAF  
AND DUMB ASSOCIATION :

I count it a very great honor to have been invited by your Society to cross the ocean for the purpose of lending my slight influence toward the promotion of the objects of your organization ; but I prize your invitation still more highly as affording me the opportunity of bearing a part in the grand movement, now in progress, which is to result in ample provision for the education of the deaf of this kingdom, through all coming time.

At a juncture of such importance, no mistake should be made. It is well therefore that full discussion should be had, so that the measures adopted for the attainment of the great end aimed at should be comprehensive and free from all bias.

The broad noonday of British enlightenment has, surely, little need of an American candle to throw light on a question of education and philanthropy, but since you have honored me with an invitation to take part in the pending discussion, I cannot do less than prove my sympathy in your cause by giving you the benefit of the conclusions I have reached after a good many years of intimate connection with the work of teaching the deaf in America.

And I will beg you to believe that however I may feel myself compelled to criticise certain methods and measures which have been, of late years, brought prominently before the public, all who labor with pure motives for the welfare of the deaf command my hearty respect and admiration, even though we may differ as to the best means of promoting this end. And I am not without hope that the day is near when all differences will be reconciled, and that all antagonisms in a cause so worthy as that you are met to advance shall be known only in the records of history.

The education of the deaf in schools established especially for their benefit has been going on for a century and a half. The practice of the two chief methods, the manual and the oral, has continued for a similar period. But on the present occasion no attempt will be made to narrate the history of deaf-mute instruction, nor of the war of methods which has been waged with varying degrees of intensity since the days of the founders of the opposing schools.

It is rather to certain events occurring within the past thirty years, and results flowing from them, that attention will be directed, for it is an interesting fact that during this shorter period, which may be spoken of as the *renaissance of the teaching of the deaf*, most surprising progress has been made on many lines, all leading toward increasingly beneficent results.

During this period schools have multiplied in all civilized countries ; conventions of instructors and principals or head masters have been held with growing frequency ; yearly meetings of educated deaf persons, like that now convened in Scotland, have become common in Europe and America ; all these assemblies, as well as international congresses of instructors and also of the deaf themselves, have discussed with eminent advantage important educational and social questions ; hundreds of journals have been established, and are being widely circulated, devoted exclusively to the promotion of the interests of the deaf ; in many schools the course of study has been lengthened far beyond the meager limits which obtained during the first century of deaf-mute education, covering in many instances a curriculum preparatory to the college or university, and in one, at the capital of the American Union, affording the higher academic education itself, with degrees in the arts and sciences to its graduates ; in America, where for forty years previously the manual method of teaching had exclusively prevailed, the last thirty years have witnessed a notable development of oral teaching, and this method has made marked progress in Great Britain, France, Italy, and other countries of Europe ; in all parts of the world public appropriations for the education of the deaf have increased, and in this country the government of her gracious majesty has gladdened the hearts of the deaf in all lands by the appointment of a commission of

distinguished and benevolent men, the result of whose intelligent and disinterested labors is now seen in a measure pending before parliament, which is intended to secure the priceless boon of education for all the deaf of this kingdom.

This general progress and organized activity in the cause in whose interest this meeting is held have naturally stimulated individual effort of many sorts. A vast amount of earnest, practical work, fruitful in the best results, has been undertaken with success. At the same time not a few well-meaning, but opinionated and impracticable, not to say visionary people, yielding their reason to enthusiasm engendered by brilliant results in cases purely exceptional, have striven well, but not wisely, to attain the impossible.

Others, not so well meaning, have resorted to misrepresentation ; claiming, as the result of their teaching, abilities and powers which had been bestowed by nature and never lost, and often declaring that by their method they trained all who sought education at their hands, when in point of fact they retained only the gifted few, ridding themselves as quickly as possible of those less capable, and hence most needing the education which was their right.

Promoters of one method of teaching have often sought, ungenerously, to advance their own cause by undervaluing the merits of that of their opponents.

Very many of those who specially advocate the oral teaching of the deaf have maintained that no distinctive feature of the manual method was worthy of consideration; that the sign language ought never to be used; that the manual alphabet ought to be discarded; and not a few of the supporters of the manual method have been equally earnest in their rejection of all oral teaching.

Happily, however, while this contention of extremists has been going on, there have been those who have had the wisdom to perceive that while neither of the opposing methods could fully meet the demands of the complete education of all the deaf, each possessed important advantages which the other lacked. And so there has come to be recognized, notably in America, a *Combined System*, which includes, under adaptable and elastic conditions, all features of all methods which can be shown to be of value to any considerable number of the deaf.

The agreement which has been reached in the United States, as to the relative value of the once opposed but now harmonized methods, cannot be better set forth than by quoting a series of resolutions unanimously adopted by a convention of instructors held in California in 1886, at which there were in attendance several hundred delegates from all sections of the country, among whom there were supporters of every known method of teaching the deaf.

The action of the convention was as follows :

*WHEREAS*, The experience of many years in the education of the deaf has plainly shown that among the members of this class of persons great differences exist in mental and physical condition, and in capacity for improvement, making results easily possible in certain cases which are practically and sometimes actually unattainable in others, these differences suggesting very widely different treatment with different individuals; it is therefore

*Resolved*, That the system of instruction existing at present in America commends itself to the world, for the reason that its tendency is to include all known methods and expedients which have been found to be of value in the education of the deaf, while it allows diversity and independence of action working at the same time harmoniously, and aiming at the attainment of an object common to all.

*Resolved*, That earnest and persistent endeavors should be made in every school for the deaf to teach every pupil to speak, and read from the lips, and that such efforts should be abandoned only when it is plainly evident that the measure of success attained does not justify the necessary amount of labor; and that those who have sufficient hearing to distinguish sounds should be taught aurally.

In the broad sentiment of these resolutions it will be seen that the combined system as it exists in America to-day includes schools where the pure oral method prevails.

And it might equally embrace, as it no doubt will in the near future, schools in which pupils will be gathered whose inability to acquire speech has been demonstrated, and whose education should, therefore, be carried on wholly by the manual method. And there might also be separate schools, as there now are distinct classes, in which the aural method could be practised, embracing pupils who are little more than hard of hearing, and who really have no need of the peculiar aids attaching to the oral or to the manual methods.

This comprehensive application of the term *Combined System* is, however, not general.

The term is commonly used to characterize the practice of bringing together in one establishment, under conditions

more or less varied, the several accepted methods and expedients for teaching.

It would be interesting, did time permit, to show how many combinations are actually effected in the American schools, with excellent results, of methods once deemed wholly inharmonious and incompatible—but without going into such particulars a few statistics only can here be given. At the beginning of the school year lately closed there were 84 schools for the deaf in the United States and Canada, containing 9,652 pupils. Of these schools, 13 with 402 pupils practise the manual method; 19 with 1,104 pupils, the oral; and 52 with 8,146 pupils sustain the combined system; and in these latter schools 2,818 pupils, or more than 34 per cent., are taught to speak.

Before determining the relative value and proper adjustment of the several methods in a comprehensive scheme for the education of the deaf, which will be attempted later on, it is important to consider which of the two leading methods, the manual and the oral, should have the preference, were one to be used in the absence of the other. For, although in America such an alternative, often pressed in the past, will probably never be seriously urged in the future, in Europe the oral method is not only practised in many countries to the exclusion of the manual, but is accorded the sanction of the government in at least one prominent state.

That the results of this imperative adoption of the oral method are far from being satisfactory, or promotive of the best interests of all the deaf, it will not be difficult to show. And with equal ease can it be made to appear that by the practice of the manual method alone, with no aid from the oral, the entire body of the deaf can be so trained and educated as to become intelligent, happy, self-respecting, self-supporting, God-fearing members of society. Indeed, this last proposition needs but little discussion. The evidences of its truth are here present in the members of the British Deaf and Dumb Association. Witnesses to its soundness are to be found in this country, in France, Italy, Sweden, the United States, Canada, Australia—in short, wherever the manual method, well and intelligently practised, has been maintained for any extended period as the exclusive basis of instruction.

The successful and happy lives of graduates of manual

schools, the world over, bear convincing testimony to the excellence of this unjustly decried method, and to its capacity to afford its subjects all the essentials of an education. And these lives show, beyond all possibility of successful contradiction, that, while speech may be a convenience and a comfort to the deaf, *it is by no means a necessity to their highest intellectual, social, and moral development.*

Furthermore, the manual method gives its beneficiaries two invaluable sources of such development, which the pure oral method not only withholds, but most cruelly places under a stigma and a ban as tending by their use to drag the deaf down to the level of the brute. The speaker does not hesitate to express the opinion, formed after many years of intimate association with deaf-mutes, educated under all possible conditions, that as balanced over against the boon of speech and lip-reading, great though it be, the gift to the deaf of the language of signs and the manual alphabet is of far greater value and comfort.

The testimony of supporters of the manual method as to the character and value of the language of signs would, no doubt, be regarded by many as prejudiced, or at least biased, and will not, for this reason, be offered.

But this objection cannot be raised against the opinion of Moritz Hill, of Saxony, easily first among the oral teachers of Germany—a disciple of Heinicke the founder of the oral method, and for forty years a practical instructor of the deaf. Near the close of his long and useful life, Hill published a treatise giving the results of his experience, and expressing the views he had been led to form.

In speaking of those who pretend that in the “German method” every species of pantomimic language is proscribed, he says :

Such an idea must be attributed to malevolence or to unpardonable levity. This pretence is contrary to nature, and repugnant to the rules of sound educational science.

If this system were put into execution, the moral life, the intellectual development of the deaf and dumb, would be inhumanly hampered. It would be acting contrary to nature to forbid the deaf-mute a means of expression employed by even hearing and speaking persons. \* \* \* It is nonsense to dream of depriving him of this means until he is in a position to express himself orally. \* \* \* To banish the language of natural signs from the school-room and to limit ourselves to articulation is like employing a gold key which

does not fit the lock of the door we would open, and refusing to use the iron one made for it.

At the best it would be drilling the deaf-mute, but not educating him intellectually or morally.

Hill continues at a greater length than can be quoted here, conceding among other important advantages growing out of the use of the language of signs, that it is "The element in which the mental life of the deaf-mute begins to germinate and grow, the only means whereby he, on his admission to the school, may express his thoughts, feelings and wishes." \* \* "An instrument of mental development and substantial instruction, made use of in the intercourse of the pupils with each other; for example, the well-known beneficial influences which result from the association of the new pupils with the more advanced." \* \* \* "A most efficacious means of assisting pupils even in the higher degrees of school training, giving light, warmth, animation to spoken language, which for some time after its introduction continues dull and insipid." \* \* \* "But it is particularly in the teaching of religion that the language of pantomime plays an important part, especially when it is not only necessary to instruct but to operate on sentiment and will, either because here this language is indispensable to express the moral state of man, his thoughts, and his actions, or that the word alone *makes too little impression on the eye of the mute* to produce, without the aid of pantomime, the desired effect in a manner sure and sufficient."

In giving its true value to Hill's noteworthy opinion, thus briefly outlined, it must be remembered that in his school, as in other oral schools where his views prevail, the language of signs is nothing more, to quote his own words, than "a very imperfect natural production, because it remains for the most part abandoned to a limited sphere of hap-hazard culture."

If, then, in this crude and undeveloped condition, it serves the important purposes that Hill ascribes to it, of how much greater worth must it be in the manual schools where it has not been left to "hap-hazard culture," but has been carefully and scientifically developed for many generations?

A most interesting and weighty judgment as to the value and capacity of the language of signs is found in a report

made to and adopted by the Academy of Zurich, after a full and careful consideration of the controversy between the great continental pioneers of deaf-mute education, Heinicke and De l'Epée.

It is well known that the latter did much to perfect the language of gestures, from a point of departure afforded by the natural pantomime devised by two untaught deaf-mute sisters, as a means of expressing their own thoughts to each other.

De l'Epée and Heinicke submitted their differences as to methods to the Academy of Zurich, and this learned body, with a natural predilection toward German ideas, appointed a committee to give careful consideration to the matter, consisting of Hesse, professor of philosophy, Stinbrukel, professor of Greek, Schinz, professor of physics and mathematics, Uster, professor of belles-lettres, and Hottinguer, professor of history and eloquence.

These profound scholars gave their decision with emphasis in favor of the method of De l'Epée, which was practically the combined system, since it gave a place of no little importance to speech, and expressed their estimate in the following appreciative terms of the language of gestures as developed and explained by De l'Epée:

The signs you employ are those which nature herself hath associated to things, and which all deaf persons use spontaneously, some of them with considerable shrewdness and dexterity; but this mute language, by your improvement of it, is changed out of the rudeness and poverty discoverable in the primitive state of all arts, into the opulence of a copious and polished tongue.

Here we do not in the least scruple to declare, what none of us could once have supposed possible, that, in our opinion, no articulate language whatsoever in use amongst mankind is fuller or of greater compass than that language which you have established for the deaf and dumb. It designates, with the utmost facility, whatever falls under the sight, or any other of the senses; nor are those notions, termed by logicians abstract, which, having no connection with the senses, would appear much more difficult to render, beyond its reach.

In attempting to judge between the manual method and pure oral (which oralists of Hill's conservative views do not advocate), it must be remembered that the promoters of the latter method—and their numbers are not small to-day—banish from the school-room, and would remove from the school life of the deaf, if they could, that language declared to be necessary and helpful by Hill, and of greatest dignity and value by the scientists of Zurich.



Of these iconoclastic oralists Arnold of Riehen may be taken as a suitable representative.

Arnold says in the *Organ* (1874), the leading German educational journal published in the interest of deaf-mute education: "As long as signs are found to exist in schools for the deaf, so long the entire cause of deaf-mute education will suffer with a cancer which saps the marrow of oral instruction, and thus of all true education;" and to his pupils he says with ceaseless iteration, "you are human beings, and must therefore speak like human beings, and not make grimaces like apes;" and boasting "that by reasoning with his pupils thus, and also by telling them that if they used signs they would be punished, he has succeeded in suppressing the sign language almost entirely in his school." And a famous general once boasted to the world that "order reigned in Warsaw."

In seeking to determine the relative superiority of the manual and the oral method were either to be adopted to the exclusion of the other, the results of the practice of the latter under this condition must be reviewed. And this will not prove a difficult task, "our enemies themselves being witnesses."

The most serious criticism which may justly be brought against the *pure* oral method, is that it *cannot* be successfully applied to all the deaf. While this is denied by some of its more zealous, not to say bigoted promoters, it is fully conceded by others equally well qualified to give evidence.

Among the instructors at the Paris Institution, where the *pure* oral method has been given exclusive sway within the last decade, none has been more able or zealous in promoting oral teaching than Ludovic Goguiillot.

In 1889 he published a valuable treatise on the teaching of speech to the deaf, in which with admirable candor he recognizes the limitations to the universal and exclusive application of his method in the following language:

May we then rightly conclude that all deaf-mutes can acquire speech? Experience demonstrates, alas! the contrary. The relatives of young deaf-mutes should not cherish hopes too high, for in that case they must prepare themselves for a very bitter disillusion. They may hope always, but entertain certainty in advance, never.

M. Goguiillot then proceeds to describe certain physical

and mental conditions, common among the deaf, which render success in teaching speech impracticable, and adds:

Do you ask what is the percentage of the cases unable to acquire speech? The proportion may vary in different countries and in different parts of the same country, but we do not think we can be accused of exaggeration in affirming that in an institution where deaf-mutes are received indiscriminately, from all the provinces and all social conditions, this number represents at least one-fourth of the school population.

M. Alard, another French instructor of eminence, in a recent publication "regards the oral method as the best where it is practicable, and believes that it is practicable with the majority of deaf-mutes;" but he declares that there are now, as there always have been and always will be, a comparatively small number who cannot derive the least benefit from that method. In this he says he does not disagree with the Italian teachers, "for they send to the *hospice* the children who, *without being idiots*, do not show sufficient aptness to be retained in the schools where the pure oral method is rigorously practised. These children receive from a special teacher, by the aid of signs, an instruction adapted to their degree of intelligence."

It will be observed, in weighing the testimony of Goguillot and Alard, that the former concedes *at least* one-fourth of the deaf to be incapable of success under the oral method, implying the possibility of a larger proportion, and that the latter *believes* the oral method to be practicable with the majority, implying equally that more than a "comparatively small number" *may* fail of success.

But the most pointed admissions of the failure of the oral method with many of the deaf come from Germany, the land where it has held undisputed sway since the days of its establishment by Heinicke one hundred and fifty years ago.

Much excitement has been created within the past three or four years by the publications of Mr. Heidsiek, an instructor of ability and prominence at Breslau, in which the approximate failure of the German or oral method has been freely acknowledged, and in which charges are made of misrepresentation at exhibitions and elsewhere.

In an article published in the *Organ* in 1886, Mr. Heidsiek speaks of institutions that "hide the refuse of the classes in obscure and not easily accessible places." "In these hidden

nooks and corners," he says, "the German method makes a miserable show. The wailing in these places reminds one of the agonies of a torture chamber." "Here many a heavy tear steals down the timid, disheartened face, but the lips remain dumb, and not the slightest confession, be it only a resonant *a*, will force itself from the oppressed breast. The most energetic champion of our cause must, perforce, lose a good portion of his enthusiasm in these chambers of weeping and wailing; but should he harden his heart even here, then I would advise him to make an experiment of from ten to twenty years' duration, to bring these pupils to that point of attainment to which the exhibition classes, consisting of those who have been taught in classical and scientific schools for hearing youth, of former stammerers, etc., have been carried."

Heidsiek advances not alone his own views, but cites the expressed opinions of other prominent teachers.

Vatter, the editor-in-chief of the *Organ* and principal of the school at Frankfort-on-the-Main, says, "while the German method proceeds to win recognition abroad, it fails to make good its claims in the land of its birth."

Jorgesen, of the Royal Institution at Copenhagen, admits "that hundreds upon hundreds of deaf-mute pupils leave the institutions annually with such a minimum of knowledge and of ability to speak as to be below all criticism."

Walther, principal at Berlin, Prussia, and author of a history of deaf-mute instruction, declares "that nothing is more injurious to the German method in its past, present, and future, than the delusion that *all* deaf-mutes can be educated after one and the same method in one and the same institution. By such means a tendency to sham is fostered, and by such means the instruction is of benefit only to *those who are not really deaf-mutes*. There *must be* a separation of schools." Of the same opinion is Soeder, the principal of the Hamburg School, who in his "Method of Language Instruction" pleads for a separation of the schools, and believes that with various classes of deaf-mutes the aim and method of instruction must differ widely.

As to the value of signs, Heidsiek fully endorses the views of Hill, and adds:

As long as there is a deaf-mute, so long the sign language will be used by him, for it is that mode of speech which most conforms to his nature and psychophysical mechanism. It may, indeed, sound like a paradox, but nevertheless

it is correct to say that for the deaf-mute there exists no spoken language; at least he finds it no valid equivalent vehicle for his inner impressions; his articulation is to him like the playing upon an instrument bereft of its strings. The living, the resonant word, or speech consisting of sounds, does not exist for the deaf-mute. The saying of the Abbé de l'Épée, "only the visible form of speech answers to the nature of the deaf-mute," retains its full validity.

It is not surprising that Heidsiek's views, so derogatory to the *pure* oral method, should be combatted by many of his colleagues in Germany and elsewhere. There are still to be found not a few so carried away by enthusiasm as to argue, as was once urged vehemently by an eminent oralist in conversation with the speaker, "that every instance of failure in attempting to teach a deaf child to speak is to be attributed either to the ignorance or the inefficiency of the teacher."

But Heidsiek is nothing daunted or discouraged by his critics. Convinced of the soundness of his conclusions he continues to express them, and his most recent publication, "The Deaf-Mute's Cry of Distress," issued only a few months since, reiterates all that he had said previously in condemnation of the oral method as the exclusive one to be used.

Wishing to have direct and recent information as to the progress of this most important controversy in Germany, the speaker wrote Mr. Heidsiek a few weeks since, and has just received a full personal letter, together with assurances of agreement from numbers of German teachers of the deaf and from former pupils, and favorable comments from educational journals; all of which indicate that in Germany the days of the exclusive promotion and practice of the oral method of teaching the deaf are numbered, and that in the near future the combined system will there be recognized and sustained as affording the greatest good to the greatest number.

It would be interesting, did time allow, to give Mr. Heidsiek's recent letter in full, but it will only be possible to include here a few brief quotations :

The German school, he says, makes its supreme effort with articulation; through unspeakable tortures are the deaf forced to speak and read from the lips; \* \* \* Out of one hundred deaf-mutes there are not five who can take part in a conversation with hearing people—whose speech can be understood and who are able to read from the lips with accuracy.

Speaking of the antagonism he has encountered, Heidsiek says:

That my energetic endeavors are very uncomfortable to the supporters of the pure oral method, that I am to them a thorn in the flesh, you can easily imagine, but I do not stand wholly alone in my opinions. There are a great number of teachers of deaf-mutes in Germany who share my views entirely, but they lack the courage to testify publicly to the truth. As Nicodemus came secretly to the Lord in the night, even so have renowned specialists come to me with the remark, "You are quite right, but one does not dare to say it."

The wasp nest into which I have burst has been accustomed for many years to absolute repose, and therefore is the effect of my disrespectful attack the more complete.

In explaining the reason of this curious attitude on the part of the majority of German teachers, Heidsiek says:

Inability hides itself under a cloak which falsely goes by the name of patriotism. Herr Renz, of Stuttgart, calls it a plain want of conscience when a German teacher of the deaf expresses his own opinion! He claims that it is the duty of every German teacher to work for the development and improvement of the German method.

It is thought to be treason to the Fatherland, a lack of patriotism and an attack on the mighty German empire, if one dares to turn aside a hair's breadth from the old customs, if one so much as questions the correctness of the pure oral method.

This is *German*; the sign method on the contrary is French, foreign, unpatriotic. But according to my opinion the question of method is not to be settled from considerations of patriotism. Whence the method comes and what name it bears is of no importance; it is, however, of the greatest consequence that those means should be used in teaching which are adapted to persons with only four senses, and which are certain to achieve the largest and best results.

Mr. Heidsiek's testimony, and that of those who more or less openly sustain his views, show clearly that there are very many deaf-mutes with whom it is worse than useless to spend time on the teaching of speech—with whom, therefore, the pure oral method fails in the great purpose for which it exists.

But it is not alone because of the acknowledged inability of many deaf-mutes to learn to speak and read from the lips that the pure oral method deserves to be seriously criticised, for it can be shown that those even who are capable of reasonable success under it fall far short of obtaining the educational advantages they might secure were they allowed the benefit of certain features of the manual method which the pure oralists rigidly condemn and reject.

And it has been discovered that the intellectual development of deaf children trained under the oral method compares

unfavorably, in many instances, with that of others of no greater mental capacity who have been taught under a judicious combination of the two methods.

To the National Institution at Washington, with which the speaker has been long connected, there have come, from time to time, for the purpose of profiting by the advanced courses of study offered there, deaf youth whose earlier training has been conducted in oral schools.

Some of them have for the first time at Washington come into a proper understanding of the language of signs, their previous knowledge of which had been limited to the "haphazard culture" spoken of by Hill, or that surreptitious cultivation declared to be inevitable by Heidsiek, and which Arnold of Riehen claims to have succeeded in stamping out by measures that were often cruel.

Young persons who had only known under such unfavorable circumstances as these the language which was theirs by nature, would find with delight and gratitude, often mingled with keen regret over their lost opportunities, in this means of communication, always previously tabooed and discredited, a source of mental stimulus and development, and of keen pleasure in social intercourse which nothing else could afford.

In the single matter of public lectures to a considerable number, including those of a religious character, the language of signs affords a means of clear, vivid, and often eloquent expression, incomparably superior to anything the pure oral method can afford.

To take this marvellous and most convenient means of communicating thought, so natural and easy to the deaf, wholly out of their life, is to those who know its value, as the pure oralists through their wilful ignorance do not, a piece of folly, not to say cruelty, that can hardly be spoken of with patience.

And now, if one would compare the results of training the deaf under the two methods, valuable testimony will be found in the annual report of the oldest American school, that at Hartford, Conn., published in 1884, in which the principal gives a table of results in thirty-two cases of his pupils, all of whom had been previously taught in oral schools for periods ranging from six weeks to eleven years.

Because of the difficulty of characterizing mental development in a concise way, I have adopted the plan, in column *four* of the following table, of gauging that development by the standing of the class which the pupil's attainments qualified him to enter; *e. g.*, the mark 2 in that column indicates that the pupil against whose name it stands was able to go into a class of two years' standing and work fairly with the class. The mark 0 in the same column indicates that the pupil was qualified only to enter the youngest class in school.

Age when deafness occurred.	Time under instruction by the oral method.	Age when admitted to the American Asylum.	Mental development when admitted to the Asylum.	Attainments in articulation at admission.	Attainments in lip-reading at admission.	Progress in articulation under combined system.	Progress in lip-reading under combined method.
1 ½ year	2 years*	13 years.	0	Poor	0	0	0
2 5½ years.	6 weeks.	9 years.	0	0	0	0	0
3 5½ years.	7 years.	15 years.	4 years	Good	Good	Good	Good
4 4 years.	9 years.	15 years.	5 years	Poor	Good	Fair	Good
5 1 year	4 years.	15 years.	2 years	Very poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
6 Congenital.	4 years.	13 years.	0	0	0	0	0
7 3½ years.	6 years.	12 years.	1 year	Poor	Poor	Very poor	Very poor
8 2 years.	3½ years.	15 years.	2½ years	0	0	0	0
9 2 years.	6½ years.	15 years.	1 year	Very poor	Poor	Good	Good
10 2½ years.	10 years.	17 years.	4 years	Fair	Fair	Good	Good
11 Congenital.	2 years.	10 years.	0	0	0	0	0
12 1½ years.	11 years.	18 years.	7 years	Fair	Very good	Good	Good
13 Congenital.	3 years.	10 years.	1½ years	0	0	0	0
14 Congenital.	3½ years.	11 years.	0	0	0	0	0
15 8 year	½ year	10 years.	0	0	0	0	0
16 Congenital.	8 years.	8 years.	0	0	0	0	0
17 Congenital.	1 year	9 years.	0	0	0	0	0
18 1½ years.	5 years.	12 years.	1 year	0	0	0	0
19 Congenital.	1½ years.	15 years.	1 year	Poor	Poor	Very good	Good
20 1½ years.	8 years.	8 years.	0	0	0	Fair	0
21 2 years.	5 years.	18 years.	2 years.	Poor	Fair	Good	Good
22 2½ years.	7 years.	13 years.	1 year	0	0	Good	Good
23 3 years.	4 years.	13 years.	0	Poor	0	Good	—
24 6 years.	5 years.	16 years.	1 year	Good	Good	Good	Good
25 Congenital.	1 year	10 years.	0	Poor	Fair	Very good	Good
26 6½ years.	4 years.	15 years.	4 years	Good	Good	Very good	Good
27 Congenital.	2½ years.	16 years.	0	0	0	0	0
28 3½ years.	3 years.	10 years.	1 year	0	0	Fair	0
29 4½ years.	1 year	8 years.	0	0	0	0	0
30 3 years.	4½ years.	11 years.	1 year	0	0	Very poor	0
31 Congenital.	1 year	8 years.	0	0	0	Good	0
32 3 years.	2 years.	9 years.	0	Poor	Poor	Very good	Fair

In connection with this table are published specimens of composition which go far to exhibit the mental development of their writers, none of which can be quoted here, for there is time only to give a few conclusions drawn by the principal, Dr. Williams, from the data he has carefully and without prejudice brought forward. He says:

We do not claim success in all cases equal to that shown in the foregoing quotations and letters. It would be folly for us to do so, since the secret of supplying mental capacity, where nature has left a deficiency, has not yet been revealed to us. We *do* claim, however, that these cases, together with the facts given in the table following them, show very plainly three things, viz: First—That the mental development even of pupils who succeed in acquiring fair articulation and lip-reading is much more rapid in many, yes, nearly all, cases under the combined method than under the oral method. Secondly—That many, who utterly fail of progress under the oral method, may reach a fair degree of mental development through the manual method. Thirdly—It is very conclusively shown by the above-quoted productions of pupils who have been tried under both systems of instruction that the sign language is not responsible for the inaccuracies in the language of deaf-mutes and the peculiarities of language commonly styled deaf-mutisms. They are to be attributed only to a want of familiarity with the proper forms of written language.

Moreover, we assert (would there were some process by which we could give samples of articulation on paper!) that the pupils who have come from the oral schools to us, even the cases of marked success in articulation and lip-reading, show no better results in those branches than articulating pupils who have received all their instruction by the combined method *for the same length of time*. Not for a moment would we argue that there should be no schools of pure oralism. That is an excellent method for some of the semi-mute. The success in *some* such cases is sufficient to more than compensate for any loss there may be in general mental development. In some such cases I have urged parents to send their children to a school using the pure oral method. But we believe that many pupils who plod along in the oral schools with very indifferent success to the end of the course, dwarfed in mind and disheartened, by a different method might have their mental powers stimulated and strengthened, and might, as a consequence, gain better results than they now do, even in the special branches of articulation and lip-reading. We believe that a majority of the pupils taught by the pure oral method would be better fitted to go forth to the duties of life, would come much nearer than they now do to being "restored to society," had they been taught by the combined method. Surely the difficulties in the path of every deaf-mute are very great, and any degree of success, even when every possible advantage is afforded him, deserves praise; but to take away his most natural, most efficient aid, and then attribute to the stupidity of the child the failure, which may fairly be laid at the door of the method employed in his instruction, is certainly very unjust, and seems to those who understand his mental difficulties and peculiarities, heartless, if not inhuman.

Enough has certainly been said to show that the education



of all the deaf cannot be effected by the exclusive practice of the pure oral method. That it fails entirely with a large proportion is acknowledged in the land of its birth. That it lacks many important desiderata with the most promising of its subjects has been demonstrated in a country where for nearly thirty years it has been promoted under most favorable conditions. And to its unwarranted, not to say arrogant, demand for complete supremacy, the reply may justly be made, *mene, mene, tekel, upharsin*.

The friends of the manual method, while they may properly claim that unaided by any features of the oral method it is capable of affording to the greatest possible proportion of the deaf an education more full and practical than that offered by the other, would by no means exclude oral teaching. Far from this; in America at least, they unanimously sustain the California resolutions, which admit even the establishment of pure oral schools for such as can be sure of success in them, and urge earnest and reasonably continued efforts to teach every deaf child to speak.

This, they believe, is all that should be accorded to oral teaching; a place, but nothing more, in a broad comprehensive system, which accepts the useful features of every method, applying them with skill and candor, and without prejudice to the varied needs of individuals, whose capabilities are marked by even greater diversities than exist in society at large.

For the triumph of these views to which she stands fully committed, America invites the co-operation of the mother country, that the moral support of a united Anglo-Saxon sentiment may be extended to our brave Teuton colleague, who has dared to raise his voice for truth against the heavy odds of established precedent and a not unnatural patriotic prejudice. With such support it will not be long before the Nicodemuses of Germany will come out openly for a reform that shall secure for the combined system of educating the deaf the world-wide prevalence it deserves.

The paramount question of methods disposed of, there remain a few matters to be considered of less, but by no means small, importance.

It has been urged in certain quarters that the education of deaf children might be well carried on in day-schools, in

connection with a general system of public instruction; and in both of the great English-speaking countries such schools exist to-day. It is claimed for them that they are more economical than boarding-schools, that they afford opportunities for the association of the deaf with hearing and speaking children, to the great advantage of the former, and that they secure to their pupils the benefits of home training and influence, of which boarding-schools would to a great extent deprive them.

Experience has, however, in America at least, shown conclusively that these claims are not sustained. The association of deaf children with those who hear, generally forced and difficult, has often been found to have a depressing effect on the deaf. The home influence has more frequently proved deleterious than helpful—for in cities and large towns, where alone day-schools for the deaf can be sustained, the homes in which deaf children are found are in a large majority of cases such as to do little to elevate or improve those who dwell in them.

In day-schools irregularity of attendance is often so great as to interfere seriously with the progress of the pupils, opportunities for moral and religious instruction are greatly diminished, and altogether the disadvantages so outweigh the single advantages of a smaller draft on the public treasury that in America day-schools for the deaf are looked upon as only a little better than no schools. In some few cases they no doubt do good work, and in all of them there are faithful and intelligent instructors, whose labors, seriously handicapped, are deserving of high praise. But on the whole the results are so evidently inferior that several day-schools have already become boarding-schools, and the managers of others would be glad to effect a similar change.

The higher or collegiate education of the deaf has received much consideration in America, and within a few years has been discussed in Europe.

Of its practicability and advantage for those mentally capable of availing themselves of it there can be no doubt, for the College at Washington, liberally sustained by the federal government for nearly thirty years, has had within its walls several hundred youth, whose success in the scientific, mathematical, philosophical, linguistic, and other studies

offered them, as well as in the practical struggles of life, is matter of history.

Students of this College have become intelligent managers of considerable farms, ranchmen and fruit growers; bank clerks and cashiers; postmasters and recorders of deeds; newspaper reporters, editorial writers, editors-in-chief, publishers and foremen of newspapers; merchants and manufacturers, microscopists, astronomers and practical chemists; draughtsmen and architects; clerks in private and public offices; founders, teachers, principals of schools for the deaf, and professors in the College; one is the official botanist of an important agricultural State; one is a prominent patent lawyer, admitted to practice in the highest courts; several have been ordained as ministers of the gospel and others are at work as lay missionaries, one of whom needs no introduction to this audience, for his intelligence, vivacity and untiring devotion to the good cause he has espoused are household words to the deaf throughout this kingdom, and cause him to be held in respectful and loving remembrance by his many friends across the water.

To one who has followed, from the closest possible point of observation, the whole course of the higher education of the deaf in America, at the college especially devoted to this work, it is an occasion of no little surprise that a serious proposal should be made to provide in any general way for this branch of deaf-mute education in colleges and universities for the hearing. That it would be possible for a deaf youth, with proper assistance, to master the course of study in any college, and so be entitled to a degree, is conceded. This has, indeed, been accomplished in a few instances.

But that one out of ten, of those who have received the substantial benefits of the College at Washington, would have undertaken to secure this higher education in connection with an ordinary college or university, even though the special facilities and aids suggested by persons of small experience had been at hand, will not be conceded by one having any practical knowledge of the subject.

The chief argument in favor of attempting the higher education of the deaf in ordinary colleges is that they will thus be brought more into association with the world of hearing

people than when left to the alleged isolation of a college established for their especial benefit.

This argument would lose much of its force could those who advance it be on the athletic field of the College at Washington, and see how often the students of the colleges and higher schools of the Capital and other cities are found there in friendly strife with their deaf comrades, or could they be at social gatherings where the hearing lady friends of the students are present in large numbers, "threading the measures of the mazy dance" with those who, though they hear no music, are still conscious enough of its rhythm and time to "trip the light fantastic toe" with grace and precision.

But allowing the importance of using all practicable means to bring the deaf into easy, happy, and helpful intercourse with their hearing fellow-men, even during the period of their college life, it is believed that this advantage can be gained in a much better way than by annexing them to colleges for the hearing.

The authorities of the National College have taken steps within a few months to bring into its walls a new element from the outside world that cannot fail to promote the association of its students with hearing people, while securing to them other important advantages.

Six Fellowships have been established, valued at five hundred dollars each per annum, which have been filled by recent graduates, in high standing, from as many leading American colleges. These young men, having all their faculties, are to become teachers of the deaf, and while preparing themselves for this work will give instruction to the students, especially in articulation, under the direction of an accomplished professor.

And it is easy to see that these young graduates of hearing colleges will impart much of the life and spirit of their respective institutions to their deaf associates at Washington, bringing them far more *en rapport* with the college world than they could be if placed singly in fifty different schools of learning, where instruction was given mainly through a sense they did not possess.

If the speaker might be so bold as to offer a suggestion looking to a provision for the higher education of the deaf in

this kingdom, he would say that no more opportune time than the present could possibly be found for securing this great boon. If to the bill now pending in parliament a clause could be added providing that in cases of exceptionally high talent, properly certified to, State aid be continued, say for five years beyond the limit of age fixed for the elementary education, some school already established could easily extend its course of study, and the College for the Deaf of Great Britain and Ireland would, with little difficulty, become *un fait accompli*.

Precisely this method was pursued thirty years ago at Washington. The primary school previously existing simply moved forward the limit of its curriculum, and the College grew into being by a natural process of development.

Until a similar extension shall have occurred in the countries on this side the Atlantic, and God grant it may not be long deferred, the College at Washington will be open, as it has always been, to the deaf of every land, with an especial welcome to its first cousins of the British Isles.

And such hospitality, if accepted, will be no more than a long-deferred return for the warm Scotch greeting given a century ago to an American youth. For the first deaf-mute in America who received an education, a Boston boy, was taught in Scotland, at the school of the distinguished Braidwood in Edinburgh.

The father of this boy, Mr. Francis Green, a man of intelligence and learning, highly gratified at the progress of his son under Braidwood's teaching, published an extended account of the methods pursued.

This work was the first American treatise on the subject, and undoubtedly exerted a decided influence in promoting the cause of deaf-mute education in America when it was formally undertaken a few years later.

And now, Mr. President, the duty to the performance of which your Society has invited me is done.

I have endeavored to direct public attention to certain considerations concerning the education of the deaf which my experience and observation lead me to feel are of first importance.

I have tried to show how enthusiasm and prejudice, with the addition, often, of a narrow vanity, masquerading under

the name of patriotism, have set up stumbling-blocks and misleading sign-posts in the pathway of progress, that ought to be removed.

I have sought to give each method and measure that has heretofore been devised for enlightening the mind or relieving the disability of the deaf-mute its true relative value and place.

If I have discredited and denied what I believe to be the unwarranted claims of some, I have condemned no man's actual beneficent achievements. I have rejected no method. On the contrary, I find good in all, and my counsel is, as you have seen, to lay hold on all, employing each in the office for which it is fitted, securing thus a union which shall give strength, harmony, and an end of all strife.

It was said in proof of the divine beneficence of our Saviour's mission upon the earth: "He hath done all things well, for he maketh the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak."

Following His benign example, let us in His spirit go forward in the work we have to do, striving with singleness of purpose, and with every means coming to our hands, so to train those whom "the finger of God hath touched," that they may at length, with ears indeed unstopped, hear the welcome, "Well done, good and faithful servant," and with tongues made musical for the melody of heaven, join in the harmonies of the life that knows no imperfection and no end.









